Thome, Gregory D

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From: Krohn, Kaarina
Sent: Wednesday, November 30, 2005 3:00 PM
To: Thome, Gregory D
Subject: Hautala in the HBL on CIA-operated flights

Hufvudstadsbladet, November 22, 2005

Heidi Hautala:

The end justifies the means

Reports of the CIA's secret detention centers and international network of spies reflects the increasingly alarming features that the international fight against terrorism has adopted. The end justifies the means – but not even the end looks too hope inspiring if judging by the situations in Iraq and Afghanistan, which keep deteriorating.

Governments have reacted in different ways to reports on possible CIA-operated flights carrying prisoners to various secret destinations. In Sweden, authorities have requested that the United States explain what has happened, and a report from the aviation on the incidents will shortly be dealt with.

This can be compared with the calm that prevails in Finland. In connection with a press conference, Foreign Minister Erkki Tuomioja responded to a question related to the matter by saying that Finnish authorities did not know about possible stopovers or flights with CIA prisoners in Finnish air space.

It is indeed difficult to be content with the answer. Parliament is at present processing an EU-U.S. treaty on the extradition of suspects. The Legislative Committee has asked for all available information on CIA's secret activities. The risk is considerable for the extradited person to fall victim to torture and other inhuman measures. Finland has until now definitely refused to contribute to anything like it.

Therefore, the Government will not get out of the matter by means of the Foreign Minister's response.

Neither can one accept that the EU member states very discretely have asked each other if it is in fact true that some of them are involved in the U.S. secret anti-terrorist network.

The U.S. strategy bypasses the EU - once again - by cooperating bilaterally with the most willing member states. Does this not go to show that the EU needs a common security policy?

In many countries discussions are under way on changes in the law and international treaties, which are too "restrictive" in terms of terrorism. The battle for civil and human rights is timelier than in a long time.

It is especially up to MPs to request government to report how they are seeing these issues and how they intend to act. In the British House of Commons, Tony Blair has made many enemies in his own party by wishing to lengthen detention periods beyond what can be regarded as acceptable under the rule of law.

With international terrorism now in the picture, there is no longer a clear borderline between foreign policy and domestic policy. Security services operate to an increasing extent across borders. This applies to our own SUPO, too. The conclusion to be drawn is that parliamentary control is necessary in monitoring organizations applying their competence within the limits of law. International terrorism and the battle against it are therefore producing a another challenge to Parliament.

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